tained sharp criticism of the government, a police officer stationed in the auditorium invited me to the entrance hall. There a platoon of policemen surrounded me and the precinct chief shouted:

"March! Go!"

"Where do you think I should go?" I asked.

"To my quarters," he replied.

The man was drunk. I turned to the open door of the meeting hall and shouted with all the strength of my lungs:

"Citizens, I am arrested! I invite all to follow me to the police station, as witnesses."

Then I took my overcoat and said to the police chief, "Now we will go to your quarters."

We were surrounded by an excited crowd. The chief sobered up at once.

"What are you starting here?" he shouted. "I have invited you to my office to ascertain your name and address." I gave him the information and returned to the meeting hall. After the meeting some two hundred citizens escorted me to the border of the precinct.

Another time I described the policy of "interpretation" as "a foul play worthy of swindlers." The chief of the precinct police, who attended the meeting, arrested me and charged me with having insulted His Majesty the Tsar and his ministers in calling them swindlers. After reading the charge sheet, I asked the officer:

"Are you ready to witness under oath that I called the Tsar a swindler? Are you ready to name the ministers whom I described this way?"

He answered grimly, "You did not name them, but everybody understood what you meant."

"You mean that when I spoke of swindlers without naming them, everybody understood that they were the Tsar and the ministers?"

"I did not say that!" he protested.

"You did!" I insisted. "You have insulted the Tsar. I have witnesses. I do not know whether you will ever get a conviction against me, but I guarantee you that you will be kicked out of your uniform."

The police chief reread his charge sheet, looked intently at me and my witnesses, and said, "Don't try to scare me. I'm not such a dumb cop. But you have shown your hand. If that is your defense, the case will never be brought to trial. We can dismiss it now." He tore the charge sheet to pieces, we shook hands, and I went home.

All in all, the campaign in St. Petersburg could not have been called free, but police interference did not do much harm to the opposition parties. It was different in the villages. However, even Stolypin's police could not compel the peasants to vote for the can-